



CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL:

Ready To Learn Learning Neighborhoods

Deadline for response: Wednesday, June 30, 2021, 4:00 PM Eastern

I.RFP AT A GLANCE

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting (“CPB”), as part of the 2020-25 Ready To Learn initiative (“RTL”), intends to contract with up to ten public television stations to create Learning Neighborhoods, an innovative model of community engagement designed to extend the reach and impact of RTL content in low-income communities. A Learning Neighborhood consists group of partners, including a local PBS station, that are acutely focused on the early learning needs of children and their families in the local station’s service area (“**Learning Neighborhood**”). Learning Neighborhoods will intentionally coordinate parent, family and educator experiences and provide a comprehensive set of touchpoints for a community to support a child’s learning, encouraging sustained use and extending the impact of the RTL content. On a macro level, the goal of the Learning Neighborhood will be to foster a community-wide culture that promotes Ready To Learn’s “Learn Together” theme and empowers children and adults to learn anytime, anywhere – at home, in the neighborhood, and within local systems and spaces.

Each Learning Neighborhood will consist of networks of partners in these communities that work together to give children ages two to eight from low-income communities (the “**Target Audience**”) a stronger foundation in functional literacy, computational thinking, executive function and career readiness with a focus on intergenerational learning and accessibility.

The stations selected through this RFP will join an existing group of Learning Neighborhoods which began their work in October 2020. The term will begin no earlier than October 1, 2021 and conclude no later than September 30, 2025 (contingent on the continuation of annual federal grant awards to CPB for the RTL program). During the first year of the contract, the selected stations will be trained on RTL resources, utilize the RTL Assets & Needs Assessment toolkit developed by RTL’s research partners, and draft a plan for their Learning Neighborhood, prior to implementing 2020-25 RTL content.

In order to be eligible to apply for funding, stations must currently be a CPB Community Service Grant recipient in good standing and have engaged in the following activities within the last five years:

- implemented recent RTL content and models;
- provided services to low-income families;
- participated in early learning initiatives; and

- demonstrated a commitment by the station’s leadership and community partners’ to those activities.

The Learning Neighborhoods are funded through a Ready To Learn Programming grant by the U.S. Department of Education, for a grant project entitled, “Learn Together: Connecting Children's Media and Learning Environments to Build Key Skills for Success” (PR Award No. S295A200004/ CFDA No. 84.295A). The total amount of funds available for all ten Learning Neighborhoods, contingent on a continuation of annual federal grant awards to CPB for the RTL program, is: \$900,000 (FY21), \$500,000 (FY22), \$500,000 (FY23), and \$700,000 (FY24).

II.FILING DEADLINE

Proposals are due via the CPB Grants Management System no later than **Wednesday, June 30, 2021 at 4:00 PM ET**. See Section IX for submission instructions.

III.CPB BACKGROUND

CPB is a private, nonprofit corporation created by Congress in 1967. The mission of CPB is to facilitate the development of, and ensure universal access to, non-commercial high-quality programming and telecommunications services. It does this in conjunction with non-commercial educational telecommunications licensees across America. CPB is the largest single source of funding for public television and radio programming, distributing funds via grants, investing in more than 400 local radio and 175 television stations. CPB grants fund activities that include: station operations, equipment, development and production of radio and television programming and overall public media support.

IV.PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Over the four-year project term, stations are expected to complete the following objectives:

1. Extend the reach and impact of CPB-PBS RTL 2020-25 content with high-touch, assets- and needs-based, community engagement strategies that can be developed locally and scaled nationally.
2. Establish and leverage community partners with local organizations whose missions and activities align with the goals of the RTL 2020-25, including, when possible, local affiliates of CPB-PBS RTL 2020-25 national partners: the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), Parents as Teachers, and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation.
3. Train community partner staff on effective use of CPB-PBS RTL 2020-25 resources and build their capacity for successful engagement with the Target Audience and their families.

4. Leverage CPB-PBS RTL 2020-25 assets to encourage multi-generational participation in early learning, fostering opportunities for families to share their knowledge, skills, and culture.
5. Co-design, test, and evaluate CPB-PBS RTL 2020-25 content, resources, and strategies to determine best practices and demonstrate impact of the initiative.
6. Strengthen community awareness of the importance of functional literacy, career readiness skill-building, computational thinking, executive function, and the role families play in a child's learning.
7. Collaborate across all Learning Neighborhoods to establish and grow communities of practice to foster innovation in areas of interest, which may include English Language Learners, rural communities, and friend-family-neighbor care, among others.
8. Share experiences with the public media system, increasing all stations' capacities to identify and support the assets and needs of children in their communities so that successful models can be adopted, scaled, and sustained in other communities across the country.

V. YEAR 1 DELIVERABLES

In the first year of the project, stations will be required to complete the following activities.

1. Learning Neighborhood Kick-off Meeting – stations must send representatives to a virtual orientation of the Learning Neighborhood stations.
2. RTL Facilitator Guide Training - stations must send representatives to a series of virtual trainings to support anti-racism/anti-bias practices in the Learning Neighborhood work.
3. Assets & Needs Assessment Training - stations must send representatives to a virtual training to learn to use the research tool developed by EDC/SRI.
4. Assets & Needs Assessment – stations must utilize the Assets & Needs Assessment tool in their chosen Learning Neighborhood communities to identify potential partners, align with community goals, and inform the design of their Learning Neighborhood plan.
5. Learning Neighborhood Project Plan – stations must work with local partners to design a Learning Neighborhood plan that identifies goals and develops a process for achieving innovations and outcomes in alignment with the RTL 2020-25 project, especially toward improving functional literacy, career readiness, computational thinking, and executive function among the Target Audience
6. Implementation of RTL 2020-25 Content – stations will work with local partners to determine opportunities in their Learning Neighborhoods to co-design and implement new RTL 2020-25 content , and to create a cohesive set of engagement models, with feedback provided to CPB/PBS to support iteration.
7. Monthly Narrative Reports – stations must provide CPB with monthly reports describing project activities, impact numbers, and any challenges to their plan.

8. Financial Reports – stations must provide CPB with a detailed financial report of the project expenses every three months.
9. Training and Meetings – stations must participate in trainings and meetings (virtual and in-person) conducted by CPB, PBS, the RTL research consortium, and other RTL stakeholders as requested.
10. Project Feedback – stations must respond to CPB and PBS’s requests for RTL-related information.
11. Annual Project Report – at the end of each year, stations must provide a comprehensive report on the station’s accomplishments and project challenges.
12. Annual Project Plan – at the end of the first year, and for each additional year in which a continuation grant is awarded to CPB, stations must provide CPB with a draft plan of activities for their second year, including a workscope and budget, and incorporate any feedback from CPB into a final version.

VI.STATION BENEFITS

Stations participating in the project will benefit by:

1. receiving access to new CPB-PBS RTL 2020-25 content;
2. gaining an enhanced awareness of educational media and its potential impact on their communities;
3. improving their capacity to use technology use and to provide training to support young children;
4. obtaining access to cutting edge educational tools and resources;
5. establishing thought partnerships with colleagues at other public media stations to innovate practices in community engagement; and,
6. expanding their ability to scale and sustain quality early learning experiences to their communities.

VII.PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Applicants must separate their technical and cost proposals.

A. Technical proposals must include the following, in the order specified:

1. Station Capacity and Commitment
Applicants must describe their station’s commitment to education and community engagement, especially among low-income families with children ages two to eight. This may be done by highlighting specific initiatives and projects, including the station’s outcomes from 2016 to 2021. In particular, applicants should describe how they adapted their station’s education and engagement work to serve children and their families, especially those from low-income communities, during the COVID-19

pandemic.

Applicants must also demonstrate their station's capacity to conduct RTL work in their communities with dedicated education and engagement staff as well as support from station leadership. This may be done by listing station staff who have previously conducted RTL or other early education work, providing biographies of any personnel who will play a significant role in the project, and describing how station leadership (executives, board members, etc.) will support the proposed Learning Neighborhood.

Applicants should describe their commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and anti-bias/anti-racism (ABAR) policies and practices. Responses should address the question: How has the applicant demonstrated real and authentic dedication to DEI and ABAR, which are critical pillars of Ready To Learn.

2. Project Community and Target Audience

Applicants should describe their station's service area, identifying low-income communities which would be well-suited to and interested in joining the Learning Neighborhood model. Applicants must provide key indicators of community assets and needs via measures such as household income, census data, the presence of Title I schools or programs, the presence of Head Start programs, and number of free and reduced school lunches. Responses should also address the questions: What are the data points in these communities that indicate room for growth in career readiness and functional literacy among the Target Audience? What initiatives or partners are present that indicate the opportunities for collaboration?

3. Collaborative Engagement

Applicants should describe their stations' capacity and willingness to work collaboratively with a network of community partners to support functional literacy, career readiness, computational thinking, and executive function for the Target Audience. Applicants should include recent partnerships that have adopted a collective impact (or similar) approach, with multiple stakeholders contributing to the end goal. In addition, responses must also address the questions: How were partnerships formed, strengthened, and maintained over the course of the project? What innovative practices or interesting lessons did the station learn from the experience(s)?

Further, Applicants should include in their responses any past experience with local affiliates of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, Parents as Teachers, and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, and describe potential opportunities for collaboration under the Learning Neighborhood Model. Applicants should also highlight any work to design, adopt, or support accessibility modes, such as Universal Design for Learning, non-English language usage, and culturally responsive design.

- B. Applicants' cost proposals for the first year of the project (October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2022) must be submitted using the Budget Template, which includes a detailed line-itemed Budget and Budget Narrative (MS Excel format). Cost information should not be included in Applicant's technical proposals.

Budget categories may include:

- Staffing descriptions (pay, fringe, and time allocations)
- Travel plans (destination, # of days, transportation, lodging, etc.)
- Equipment (e.g. tablets, routers)
- Supplies
- Contractual (e.g. consultants, partner stipends)
- Explanation of other direct costs
- Indirect costs/rate (with NICRA, if applicable)

VIII. SELECTION CRITERIA

CPB will evaluate proposals based on the criteria below with the associated weight.

- A. Quality and experience of project personnel in early learning media, as well as the overall commitment of station leadership to the project (40%)
- B. Demonstrated capacity of station and community organizations to participate in a collaborative effort that supports functional literacy, career readiness, computational thinking, and executive function through engagement of the Target Audience, their families, and their educators (35%)
- C. Reasonableness of proposed budget costs (25%)

IX. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

To gain access to the CPB's grants management system, please send an email request to Devon Steven, Director, RTL Community Engagement, dsteven@cpb.org, no later than Wednesday, June 23, 2021 at 4:00 PM ET. CPB will provide access within two business days.

Applications are due no later than Wednesday, June 30, 2021 at 4:00 PM ET.

All questions must be submitted in writing to Devon Steven, at the email address above. CPB will post all questions, without attribution, and its response on CPB's website. The deadline for submitting questions is Wednesday, June 23, 2021 at 4:00 PM ET.

X.TIMELINE

Action Items	Dates
RFP announced	Monday, May 24, 2021
Webinar for interested applicants	Thursday, June 3, 2021 at 2:00pm ET
Deadline to request access to grants system	Wednesday, June 23, 2021 at 4:00pm ET
Proposals due to CPB	Wednesday, June 30, 2021 at 4:00pm ET
Selections announced	September 2021

XI. WEBINAR FOR INTERESTED APPLICANTS

CPB and PBS will host a webinar for interested applicants on Thursday, June 3, 2021 at 2:00pm ET.

<https://cpborg.zoom.us/j/94791661717?pwd=Z3Q5SIYvSzFZdStNeHhkNk83c0pRZz09&from=addon>

Meeting ID: 947 9166 1717

Passcode: RTL202025

To participate by phone, dial by your location:

- +1 929 205 6099 US (New York)
- +1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)
- +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)
- +1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)
- +1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)
- +1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

Meeting ID: 947 9166 1717

Audio-only passcode: 743492455

Webinar participants may submit questions in writing during the webinar. The webinar will be recorded and a link to the recording will be posted in the FAQ shortly after the conclusion of the webinar.

XII.ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

A. Reports on RTL Research and Best Practices

Applicants may find the following resources useful for identifying best practices in RTL and serving the Target Audience as they prepare their proposals:

- <https://www.pbslearningmedia.org/readytolearn/>
- EDC: <http://cct.edc.org/rtl/>

B. RTL Overview

In 2020, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) and PBS were awarded a Ready To Learn grant from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education. The five-year grant (contingent upon annual continuation of the grant award by the federal government) will connect children’s media and learning environments to build key skills for success.

The initiative will result in the development of new content that helps young children build vital skills to help them succeed in school and life, including functional literacy, critical thinking and collaboration — and shows them career options in age-appropriate ways. This will be done by producing multiple forms of content, some that show real-life examples of success by having adult role models share how they turned their childhood interest into their life’s work. It will also help parents, caregivers and communities support children’s learning and growth, with a goal of putting children on a path to success in learning, work and life.

CPB and PBS will work with experts in early learning and leading children’s media producers to create new PBS KIDS multiplatform content, including:

- (i) "Wombats!" produced by GBH, which teaches preschoolers critical thinking and collaboration skills by following the adventures of three marsupial siblings as they explore their "Treeborhood."
- (ii) "Liza Loops," created and produced by Dave Peth, children ages 5-6 will encounter sociable city kid Liza, an aspiring inventor, and her fuzzy blue sidekick Stu as they invent solutions to help others in their neighborhood.
- (iii) a third series to be developed with a literacy curriculum, in addition to digital games and podcasts, as well as resources to support family learning at home, in virtual spaces and in the community.

Local PBS stations will work with community partners, including schools, public libraries, museums, businesses, local chambers of commerce and other stakeholders, as part of a national network of Learning Neighborhoods devoted to supporting the early learning needs of children in low-income communities. Critical national partners include the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), Parents As Teachers and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation. The first phase of Learning Neighborhood work is currently taking place in 12 communities, including: Anchorage, Alaska (Alaska Public Media); Austin, Texas (Austin PBS); Birmingham, Alabama (Alabama Public Television); Detroit (Detroit Public TV); Las Vegas (Vegas PBS); Lexington, Kentucky (Kentucky Educational Television); Los Angeles (PBS SoCaL); Madison, Wisconsin (PBS Wisconsin); New York (WNET); Owings Mill, Maryland

(Maryland Public Television); Pittsburgh (WQED); and Tallahassee, Florida (WFSU). CPB anticipates adding additional communities will be added during years 2-5 of the grant.

The Education Development Center will lead a research effort to assess the success of the five-year initiative, with emphasis on the new content's ability to build key skills and inspire children to explore the "world of work." Project research will also provide new insights into the ways in which newer media, intergenerational learning, and accessibility options can support children's learning. Data analytics will advance the understanding of how games can influence learning gains, and formative studies will drive informed content creation.

XII. CPB Terms

This RFP does not constitute an agreement by CPB to extend funding to any party. CPB may, in its sole discretion, elect not to pursue this project. Proposals submitted in response to this RFP by an applicant ("Applicant") shall be valid for at least 90 days following the closing date of applications.

1. Multiple Applications. Neither multiple nor alternative applications will be accepted.
2. Confidential Information. Applicant should clearly identify any portion of its proposal that it considers confidential, proprietary commercial information or trade secrets.
3. Subcontractors. Applicant must identify all subcontractors and advisors and include a description of their roles.
4. Exceptions. Applicants selected for funding are deemed to have accepted the terms in this RFP. Any exceptions must be clearly identified in their proposals. CPB, at its sole discretion, may reject proposals that include exceptions.
5. CPB Information. In reviewing Applicant's proposal, if CPB shares materials, data and other information and analysis (collectively "Information") with Applicant, Applicant shall be deemed to agree to protect, preserve and maintain all such Information on a strictly confidential basis, and to promptly return to CPB, upon its request all tangible copies of the same in Applicant's possession.
6. Proposals. By submitting a proposal, Applicant grants to CPB the right to duplicate, use, disclose and distribute all of the materials submitted, for purposes of evaluation, review and research. In addition, Applicant guarantees that it has full and complete rights to the materials and that they are not defamatory not do they infringe upon or violate the privacy rights, copyrights or other proprietary rights of any third party. Applicant is responsible for any violation of a copyright, trademark, patent, trade secret or other

rights related to the materials.

7. Misc. CPB is not responsible for any loss or damage to material that Applicant provides to CPB in conjunction with this RFP. Upon submission, Applicant's proposal shall become CPB's property, excluding any intellectual property rights there, and CPB is not required to return the same.

XIII. Conditions of Agreement

If a proposal is selected for funding, Applicant must sign a binding agreement that meets with CPB's approval (Agreement). Until the Agreement is executed by both parties, no express or implied commitment has been made to provide funding. Applicant is not authorized to commence work until the Agreement is fully executed, nor will CPB compensate it for the same. If Offerors opt to commence work, they do so at their own risk. No oral or written statement other than the signed, written agreement will govern or modify the relationship.

Applicant must guarantee that, among other things, that any work it undertakes related to this RFP is not defamatory and will not violate or infringe upon the privacy rights, copyrights or other proprietary rights of any third party. Applicant must also agree to indemnify CPB against any loss resulting from breach of any of the representations and warranties in the Agreement.

The Agreement will contain additional requirements include but are not limited to:

1. Applicant's Financial Position. Applicant must demonstrate that it has adequate financial support, financial controls and other resources required to complete the work and to deliver reports and/or other intellectual property set forth in the Agreement;
2. Record Keeping. Except for the work that Applicant completes pursuant to a fixed price fee structure, Applicant must provide CPB with documentation that evidence the actual costs of the project (including timesheets or other relatively contemporaneous record-keeping documents) and supporting documentation that demonstrates that all costs were reasonable, necessary and incurred for the project.

Applicant must maintain, for three years following the end of the Agreement, all subcontracts and other agreements, licenses, clearances and other documents related to the project, copies of which it shall make available to CPB and to the U.S. Comptroller General or other representatives of each, upon request, for examination and audit purposes. Applicants must also ensure that any subcontractors or consultants engaged for the project maintain such records for this period.

3. U.S. Comptroller Audits. Applicant must provide CPB with a copy of any U.S. Comptroller General audit report issued in connection with the project.

4. Other Regulations. Applicant must comply with the provisions of the Education Department of General Administrative Regulations, the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, equal employment opportunity and nondiscrimination laws and policies and all other applicable laws and government regulations;
5. Rights. Applicants must grant to CPB an irrevocable, perpetual, worldwide, royalty-free, nonexclusive license, to use the project, including the individual components described in the Agreement in any manner and for any purpose, including all reports.

Applicant further agrees that it, will secure any copyrights other intellectual property rights in any research and/or materials created, developed, compiled or produced by them or by any subcontractor or by any their party participating in the preparation of the same.

6. Lobbying. Applicant is strictly prohibited from using any funds provided by CPB:
 - a. for any activity designed to influence legislation or appropriations pending before the United States Congress or any state legislature; and
 - b. to conduct any reception or provide any other entertainment for any officer or employee of the federal government or any state or local government.
7. Governing Law. The Agreement will be governed by construed in accordance with the laws of the District of Columbia without regard to its conflict of law provisions.
8. Funding. CPB's funding in the Agreement is conditioned on and subject to CPB's continued award and receipt of RTL funds from the U.S. Department of Education to support the project.